

to be one of the greatest value, inasmuch as no other medicine can be named which in this respect seems to come into competition with it. How far the effect is permanent, and capable of completely removing the sensation of hypochondriasis, or in what degree it may require to be resumed or repeated, Dr. Osborne as yet has not been able to determine; neither did he think it necessary, before this Association, to clear himself from the absurdity of bringing it forward as a universal *nepenthes*. Like all other agents affecting the nerves of sensation, its potency must vary much in different individuals, requiring various doses, while in some cases it may fail altogether.

With regard to the mode of administering chloroform internally: as its specific gravity is nearly 1.5, and it is insoluble in water, it must, when swallowed, soon settle at the bottom of the fluids in the stomach; and although it is volatilized, yet being covered, and under pressure, it may remain in contact sufficiently long to irritate the stomach at the part of contact, as was proved to take place in the case of camphor by Orfila. Hence, then, it is desirable that it should be diffused or diluted before it is taken. In aqueous mixtures, even when shaken up, it soon falls so that it cannot be equally measured out, and its pungency is annoying even to the mouth. In gum Arabic mucilage, it soon collects in large globules at the bottom of the bottle, covered with a white powder of arabine which it has precipitated. To obviate this inconvenience it has been proposed to give it suspended in syrup, but to make a syrup of the same specific gravity 1,006 grains of sugar to the ounce of water would be required, while that of the Pharmacopœia contains only 874 grains; besides, chloroform has a heavy sweet taste which renders the addition of syrup peculiarly objectionable.

The menstruum which Dr. Osborne used in the above and other cases, was the decoction of Irish moss (carrageen). With this, chloroform forms a uniform mixture, and in the proportion of ten drops to the ounce, they remain for an indefinite time without separation taking place. The taste of the mixture is sweet, like that of a heavy syrup, to relieve which it may be well to add a few drops of some aromatic or bitter tincture.

Another mode of avoiding the pungency of chloroform, is by giving it in combination with tinctures, as it is soluble in alcohol, and remains dissolved even in proof spirits. The following is a specimen of this kind of formula, and is peculiarly grateful to the taste, and susceptible of various additions and alterations, according to the requirements of individual cases: Chloroform, and tincture of ginger, of each half an ounce; aromatic spirits of ammonia, two drachms. Mix. Twenty-five drops to be taken thrice daily in a wineglassful of milk.—*Dublin Quarterly Journ. Med. Science*, Nov. 1853.

14. *On the Use of Vegetable and Mineral Acids in the Treatment, Prophylactic and Remedial, of Epidemic Disorders of the Bowels*.—An interesting paper on this subject was read before the Epidemiological Society, July 3, 1854, by J. H. TUCKER, Esq.—The author commenced by alluding to the remarkable, but well-established fact, that in 1849 the cider districts of Herefordshire, Somersetshire, and part of Devonshire, were, to a great extent, exempt from the epidemic ravages of cholera, while the disease was raging around. Upon further inquiry, it was ascertained that this exemption was confined a good deal to those individuals who drank cider as a common beverage, and that those who partook of malt liquor occasionally suffered. He also remarked that, in some parts of France and in Normandy, more particularly where cider is the common beverage, cholera is seldom known to exist; and further, that Switzerland was reported to have been free from its visitation.

Having adduced these and other facts in proof of the prophylactic power of cider, the author expressed his opinion that other vegetable acids would be found of service, such as lemon-juice, orange-juice, and sour wines made from grapes, or even from gooseberries. And as it would be found impossible to supply the whole of London with a sufficient quantity of pure cider, Mr. Tucker suggested that *vinegar* might be found a useful substitute in case of another outbreak of cholera, provided that it could be obtained in a state of purity. In confirmation of his view of the sanative and medicinal virtues of vinegar, the author quoted Hippocrates, who (*de natura muliebri*) "employed

white vinegar medicinally"—Plutarch and Livy, who refer to the use of vinegar by Hannibal, in his passage over the Alps, when he is said to have "softened the rocks with fire and vinegar," an operation which the author facetiously regarded as rather metaphorical than chemical, as the vinegar, swallowed by the troops, probably sustained their strength, and thus in effect softened the asperities of their rough way. The author also quoted from Roman history the story that "Scipio Africanus is said to have gained a great battle with a few skins of vinegar," the troops refusing to march until the general had obtained a supply. Cæsar was also reported to mention in his Commentaries the supply of vinegar to the troops; and Mr. Tucker remarked that the drink of the Romans in all their campaigns was vinegar and water, and, sustained by that beverage, they conquered the world. Modern authors (Sir John Pringle, Sir Gilbert Blane, and others) were also quoted in proof of the antiseptic and medicinal qualities of vinegar. The author then proceeded to show that acid drinks were not only preventive, but remedial in epidemic disorders of the bowels. Cases were related, in which not only persons were exempt from attacks of cholera raging around them, who drank large draughts of cider, but a case of severe cholera was also related, which yielded to the diluted juice of sour apples. The efficacy of the *Mineral Acids*, especially the sulphuric, in diarrhœa, and especially in choleraic diarrhœa, was also advocated by reference to numerous facts and authorities. He also referred to some established facts connected with the spread of epidemic dysentery in the army, showing the efficacy of vegetable acids in that disease.

In conclusion, Mr. Tucker suggested a necessary caution relative to the use of the wretched and unwholesome substitute for vinegar commonly sold in the London shops.

The discussion which followed the reading of the paper, elicited many facts in confirmation of the author's views; and, as to the efficacy of sulphuric acid largely diluted with water, in choleraic diarrhœa, there was not a dissentient voice.—*Lancet*, July 15.

15. *Sulphuric Acid in the Treatment of Cholera and Choleraic Diarrhœa*.—Dr. H. W. FULLER, Assistant Physician to St. George's Hospital gives (*Med. Times and Gaz.* Aug. 12, 1854) the following statement relative to the efficiency of sulphuric acid in the treatment of cholera and choleraic diarrhœa, deduced not only from his own experience, but also from the concurrent testimony of a number of practitioners.

"Firstly. As to the form in which the medicine should be administered. One ounce of the dilute sulphuric acid of the Pharmacopœia should be added to eleven ounces of water, and of this mixture three table-spoonsful should be given as a dose. The acid is very grateful to the palate, and to the stomach: so I rarely mix it with syrup or any flavourings, which are apt to nauseate, if not to interfere with the action of the remedy. Sometimes, however, I add a drachm or half a drachm of chloric ether to every alternate dose of the medicine, and occasionally, at the outset of the attack, administer two grains of opium in a pill, combined, it may be, with five grains of calomel. If the first stage of the disease is passed, I never administer opium.

"Secondly. In ordinary cases of choleraic diarrhœa, implying by that term cases in which there is thin watery purging, and possibly vomiting, with faintness and coldness, and clamminess of the surface, a pale moist tongue, crampy pains in the belly, and possibly also cramp in the extremities, three or four doses of the acid mixture, taken at intervals of half an hour, will generally suffice to effect a cure. The vomiting and purging will be stayed, the cramps will subside, and heat will return to the extremities. Little or no after treatment is usually required.

"Thirdly. In confirmed cases of cholera, characterized by the symptoms already enumerated, but accompanied by a feeble or imperceptible pulse, collapse and blueness, or lividity of the countenance and extremities, a dose of the acid mixture should be administered every twenty minutes, until warmth returns to the extremities, and colour to the lips. The addition of chloric ether to each dose of the mixture is extremely serviceable, if tolerated by the stomach. As the